

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesman

For Immediate Release
2006/602

June 9, 2006

MEDIA NOTE

**Administration Transmits Proposed Legislation to Implement Agreement to Protect
RMS Titanic Wreck Site**

Today, on behalf of the Administration, the Department of State transmitted to Congress proposed legislation to implement for the United States an international agreement with the United Kingdom, Canada and France that will lead to increased protection of the RMS Titanic and its wreck site. Concerted action by the four nations most closely associated with the Titanic would effectively foreclose financing for, and the technical ability to conduct, unregulated salvage and other potentially harmful activities.

If enacted, this legislation will implement the agreement called for by Congress in the RMS Titanic Maritime Memorial Act of 1986 (Titanic Memorial Act), and signed into law by President Ronald Reagan. Consistent with the Titanic Memorial Act and with the Ocean Action Plan of the current Administration, the agreement and legislation will designate the RMS Titanic wreck site as an international maritime memorial to those who lost their lives in its tragic sinking and whose grave should be given appropriate respect. They will put in place several other important measures to protect the scientific, cultural and historical significance of the wreck site.

The United States signed the agreement in 2004 subject to acceptance following the enactment of implementing legislation. Once this legislation is signed into law, the United States can deposit its acceptance and the Agreement will become effective for the U.S. Under the legislation the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA) will play the lead role in regulating dives to the Titanic shipwreck for the United States.

Although RMS Titanic sank 96 years ago and rests 12,000 feet below sea level, it continues to capture the interest of our nation and the attention of people around the globe. By enacting this legislation and becoming a party to the agreement, the United States will become a leader in the international community in protecting perhaps the most important historic shipwreck in history, in accordance with the most current standards of underwater scientific, historic and cultural resource protection, conservation and management.

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